Is 'warrior gene' responsible for violent behavior?

At the root of their defence was monoamine oxidase A, known as MAOA. The gene MAOA encodes an enzyme whose role is to destroy molecules called neurotransmitters. MAOA is essential for a normal life. When it's not working at full capacity, or when unusual genetic variants are at play in a person's neurons, all manner of problems can transpire.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, reports began seeping out of labs that particular versions of MAOA were turning up more often in people with aggressive, impulsive or criminal behaviour.

MAOA acquired the nickname the 'warrior gene' around 2004.

Despite all the studies, we simply do not know well enough how this gene works, how it participates in the biological melee of a life, how life experiences and chance coordinate with the external world of people. Even if we did, the legal ramifications would be equivocal, and subject to political leaning. Are we slaves or masters of our genes? We are neither, and it's a dumb, simplistic question. To say otherwise is a biological determinism with profound legal consequences.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: Why we can't blame "warrior genes" for violent crime